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April 1993

Vale District Planning Update
Jordan Resource Area

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interest of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

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Planning Update

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Management Framework Plan (MFP) Planning Update is designed to provide the public with resource management information, and to assist the public in understanding land management proposals and decisions.

This Planning Update, the fifth of similar reports, summarizes progress towards implementation of the Southern Malheur Resource Area MFP (renamed Jordan Resource Area in October of 1988). Previous progress reports—including rangeland program summaries and planning updates—were issued in December 1986 and January 1991, and September 1991 and May 1992 respectively. Specifically, the update identifies work accomplishments for fiscal year 1992 (10/1/91 to 9/30/92), and achievements anticipated for fiscal year 1993 (10/1/92 to 9/30/93).

What Can You Find In This Document

The Jordan Resource Area MFP Planning Update is an annual publication. Its format may change; however, major sections like those described below will be included in each edition.

Feature Report: These reports highlight topics of concern or high public interest within the Jordan Resource Area. The articles feature leading accomplishments or upcoming events. This year's report is about "The-Hole-In-The-Ground" petroglyph site located on the National Wild and Scenic Owyhee River.

Summary of Work: The summary section identifies accomplishments for each major resource program for the previous fiscal year (1992).

Program Initiatives: This section describes notable projects in major resource programs during the upcoming fiscal year (1993).

Environmental Assessment (EA) Register: The register provides a standard public notification of upcoming projects which the public may wish to have input on. Included on the register are EAs that may be completed in fiscal year 1993 or succeeding years.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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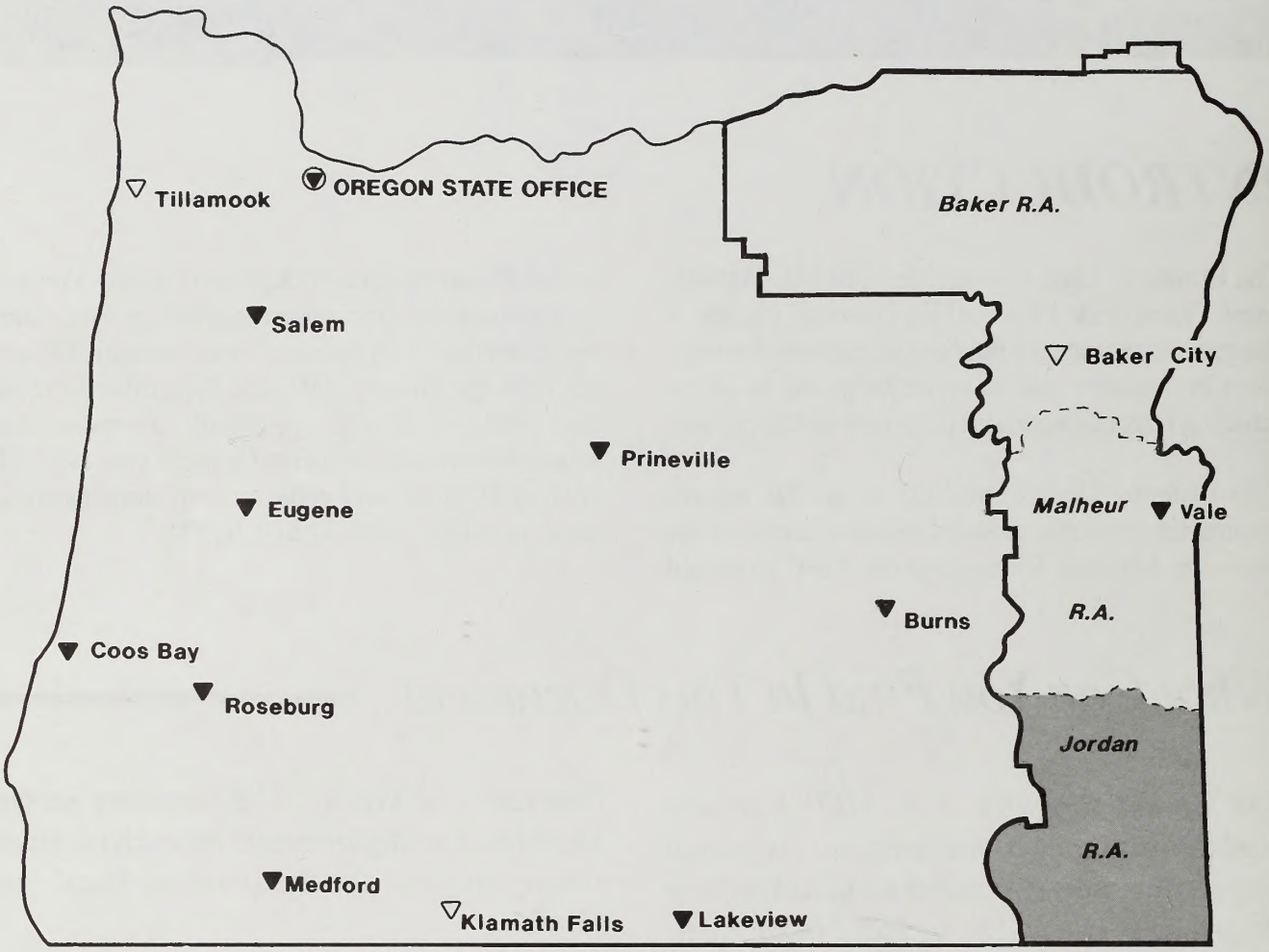
VALE DISTRICT

GENERAL LOCATION MAP



BLM State Office

BLM District Office

BLM Area Office

District Boundary

Resource Area Boundary

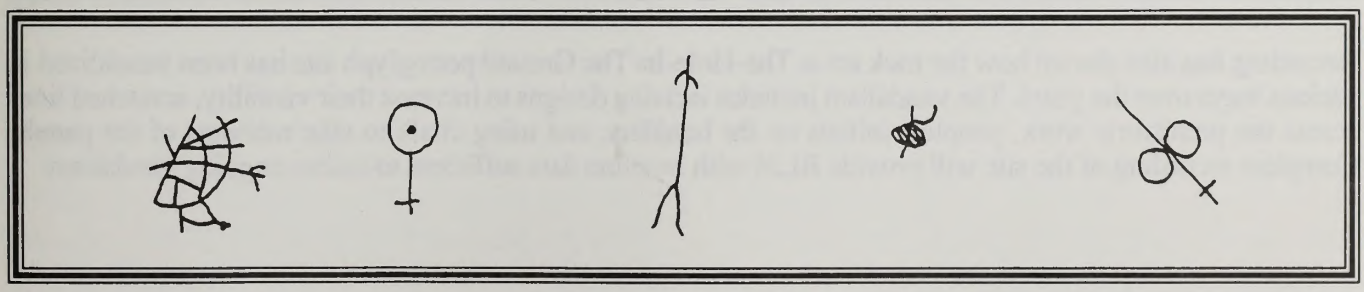
"The-Hole-In-The-Ground" Petroglyph Site, Wild and Scenic Owyhee River

Among the many outstandingly remarkable values in the Wild and Scenic Owyhee River corridor, The-Hole-In-The-Ground petroglyph site is one of the most notable.

"Angel" petroglyph, characteristic of the many petroglyphs at The-Hole-In-The-Ground site.

Background

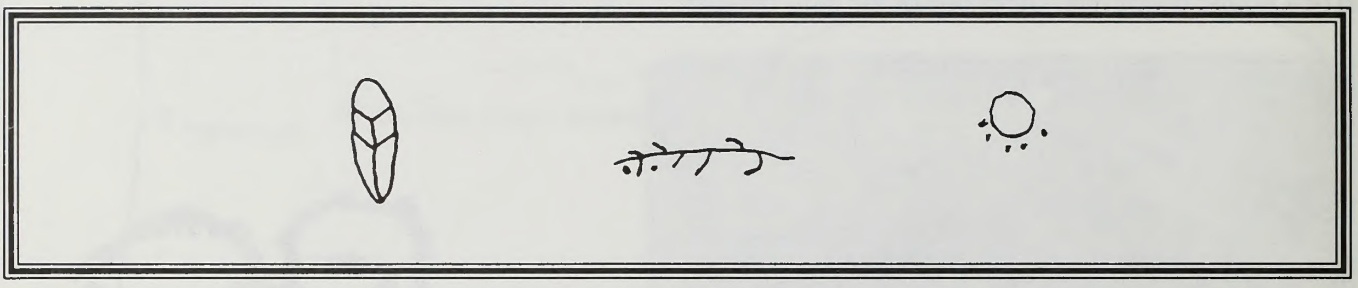
The site has been known to professional archaeologists since the 1930s when Luther Cressman, the father of Oregon archeology, briefly described it in his book *Petroglyphs of Oregon*. Over the years, BLM personnel have recorded parts of this very large rock art site. Definitive recording began during the 1991 field season, continued during 1992 when it was circumscribed by funding considerations, and will continue into the 1993 field season.



How to Find the Protoglyph Site

The-Hole-In-The-Ground petroglyph site is located about 45 miles northwest of Jordan Valley. The site lies along an elevated bench on the north side of the Owyhee River, just east of The-Hole-In-The-Ground Ranch. The bench is strewn with large basalt boulders that prehistoric people marked with many different patterns, including curvilinear designs, dots, outlines of animals, and representations of human figures.

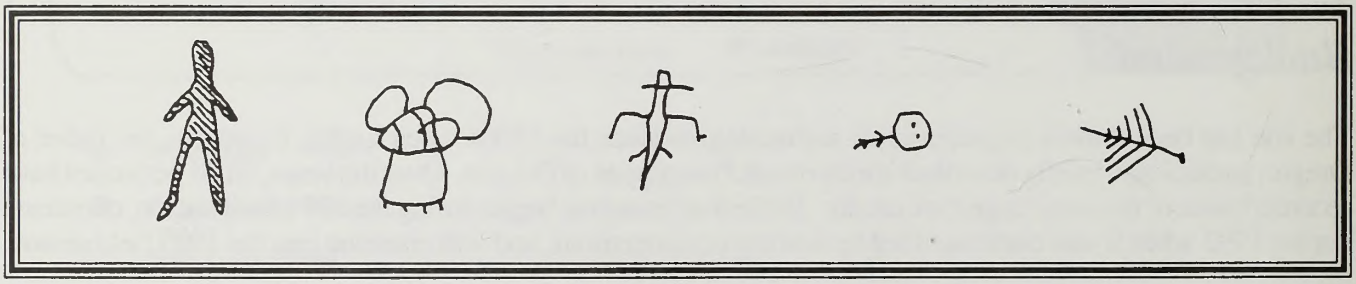
Access to the site is difficult. The site can be reached by floating down the Owyhee River, or by crossing the river at The-Hole-In-The-Ground Ranch (private land). For the latter, a raft, canoe, kayak or some type of boat is advised. During site recording, BLM personnel camped on the south bank of the river, with private land owner permission, crossing each day to work at the site.



What Site Recording Reveals

Jordan Resource Area archaeologists found that the rock art site is much larger than reported. In earlier descriptions, designs were noted on 27 boulders. Currently, 55 ornamented boulders have been inventoried, and we're still counting. Many basalt boulders are heavily covered with designs and figures that have been pecked into the rock surface. In some instances, older art work has had newer designs, dots, and figures superimposed on it, indicating that the site was used by people for many years.

The rock art was pecked rather than scratched into the boulders. This means the artist struck the boulder with a smaller rock—probably a hard, rounded river cobble—crushing the basalt surface and leaving small pockmarks or indentations to form the design. This art technique is illustrated by the graphics on this page, and line drawings of typical examples throughout the update.

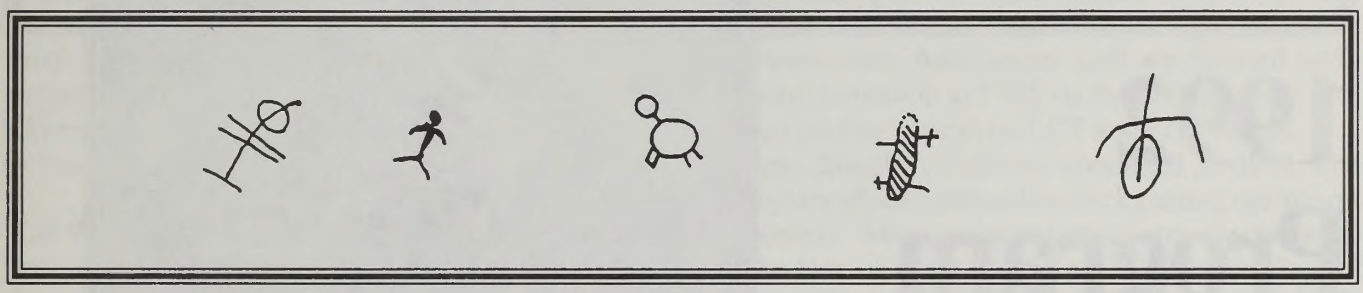


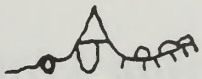
Recording has also shown how the rock art at The-Hole-In-The Ground petroglyph site has been vandalized in various ways over the years. The vandalism includes incising designs to increase their visibility, scratched lines across the prehistoric work, people's initials on the boulders, and using chalk to take rubbings of the panels. Complete recording of the site will provide BLM with baseline data sufficient to assess ongoing vandalism.

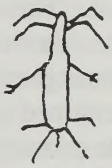
Protective Measures Being Taken

Our management objective is to protect the petroglyphs. Besides having aesthetic, scientific and anthropological values, the petroglyphs provide Owyhee River visitors with a glimpse of the canyon's human past. A primary protection measure already undertaken is informing the public that rock art is fragile and that any alteration is against the law.

Other protective measures include increasing surveillance by the Owyhee River rangers and law enforcement personnel, providing visitors with educational and interpretive materials, and soliciting public cooperation to protect the petroglyphs by asking them to report illegal acts such as altering of rock art. We hope to preserve The-Hole-In-The-Ground petroglyphs for future generations to learn from and to enjoy.





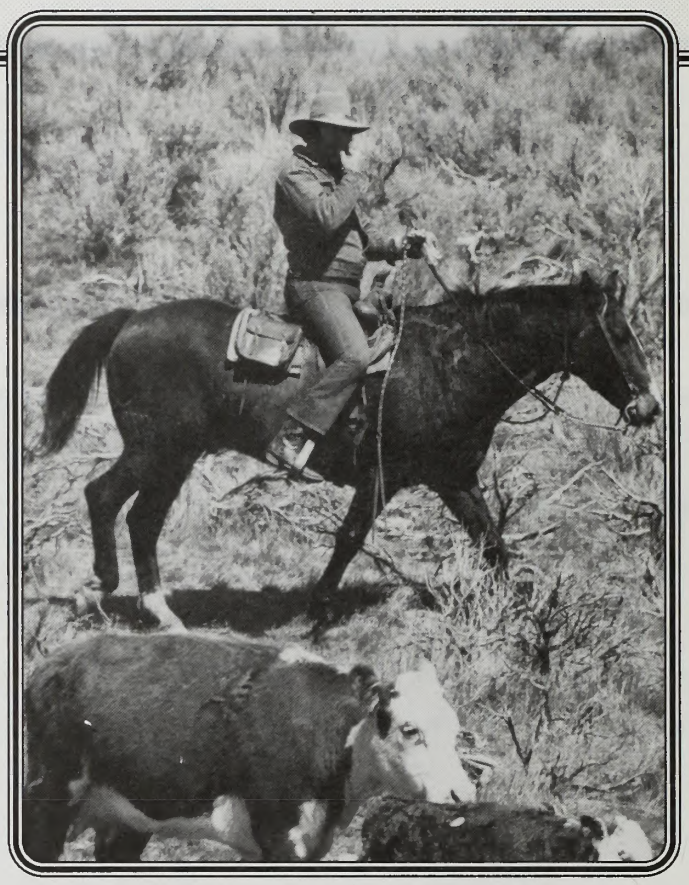


Classic The-Hole-In-The-Ground petroglyph on basalt boulder.

Summary of Work

The Preferred Land Use Alternative document (March 14, 1983) for the Northern and Southern Malheur Resource Areas identifies the land use planning decisions for the Jordan Resource Area. The Land Use Alternative also identifies supplemental land use decisions for livestock and wilderness programs as contained in the Rangeland Program Summary and Wilderness EIS respectively. Identifying all land use planning decisions for the Jordan Resource Area requires review of the 1983 Preferred Land Use Alternative, Southern Malheur Rangeland Program Summary (January 1984), Southern Malheur Grazing Management Program Draft EIS (1983), Final Southern Malheur Grazing Management EIS (September 1983), and the Oregon Wilderness EIS (December 1989).

1992 Program Summary



Range Management

Continued emphasis was given to use supervision, monitoring, allotment evaluations, and project implementation during the 1992 grazing season. This emphasis supports the Preferred Use Alternative by allocating forage to achieve management objectives that would provide a sustained yield over time while at the same time protecting soils, forage plants, and watershed values.

There were eight "I" (improved) and 22 "M" (maintained) allotments monitored for utilization and actual use. These represent all of the "I" and "M" allotments in the resource area. Of those 30 allotments, two "I" and four "M" allotments were also monitored for trend and climate in preparation for allotment evaluations during the late winter to early spring of 1993.

Allotment evaluations were conducted on two "I" and six "M" allotments in 1992. A major part of these allotment evaluations, as described in the May 1992 update, is a review by various resource specialists who consider important resource values such as wildlife, recreation, and wilderness. Permittees are an important part of the evaluation process providing on-the-ground management input.

None of the eight 1992 evaluations have been finalized, and five of the eight 1991 evaluations are final. Both years' evaluations have been through the meeting process, but are awaiting editorial changes and coordination efforts. All evaluations are expected to be approved by the area manager this fiscal year. The eleven evaluations not yet final are: Saddle Butte, Coyote Lake, and West Cow Creek from 1991; and Fifteen-Mile Community, Wroten, Albisu-Alcorta,

Echave, Jackies Butte, Lodge, Oliver, and Sherburn from 1992. Evaluations for Ten Mile Seeding, Anderson, Bowden Hills, and Campbell allotments were finalized in 1992, and their summaries are included in this update (see Appendix A). The final evaluation for Whitehorse Allotment was summarized in the 1992 Planning Update. No permanent adjustments in active preference occurred in 1992.

Range improvements were again a major workload in 1992. Because additional funding for the Trout Creeks Geographical Emphasis Area (GEA) ended last year, a strong effort was made to finish the major projects. Projects carried over from the GEA effort were covered under existing funding in 1992. The bulk of these projects were in the Whitehorse Butte and Fifteen Mile Community Allotments. A list of completed projects is found in Appendix A.

The Willow/Whitehorse cutthroat (local name) trout was formally determined to be a Lahontan cutthroat trout (LCT), the federally listed threatened species, on November 5, 1991. This determination affected four allotments in the Trout Creek/Oregon Canyon Mountains Riparian Effort (formally the Trout Creek GEA). An analysis of the effects of the livestock grazing program on LCT was completed on the Whitehorse Butte, Fifteen-Mile Community and McCormick Allotments during the spring of 1992. These analyses or biological assessments were forwarded to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for a biological opinion regarding the likelihood of BLM's livestock program jeopardizing the continued existence of LCT. The fourth allotment, Zimmerman, did not have grazing practices impacting LCT in 1992 and therefore an analysis was not forwarded to FWS.

The FWS responded with three no jeopardy decisions in record time. The result of this effort was that livestock grazing was allowed to continue in the Trout Creek/Oregon Canyon mountains. Historical grazing practices were significantly changed, however, in Fifteen Mile Community and McCormick Allotments to meet the needs of Lahontan Cutthroat trout and its habitat. Most guidance of the Whitehorse Butte Allotment Management Plan (AMP) was followed, except where drought and the timing of the biological opinions prevented the use of one of the spring pastures.

Several tours were conducted in the Trout Creek/Oregon Canyon Mountains in 1992. Tour participants included BLM, ranchers, environmental interests, FWS, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. The tours showed that when grazing management is tailored to meet riparian values, proper functioning riparian systems can be achieved. The key to any management is the compliance of the grazing operations with the grazing systems prescribed for the allotment. We found that, even in a drought year, substantial progress can be expected in riparian management when compliance is met.

No AMPs were completed in 1992 due to the drought and the issues regarding LCT and the Trout Creek/Oregon Canyon Mountains riparian effort. We also deferred the decision on the Zimmerman Allotment Environmental Assessment until we forward additional information to FWS on the effects of our proposed grazing system on LCT and LCT habitat.
Severe drought conditions continued in 1992 with voluntary adjustments of livestock grazing use in most allotments. Many pastures were in non-use status due to the lack of water and, in some cases, the lack of forage. The majority of other pastures had reduced grazing numbers and/or seasons of use. These adjustments were the result of the excellent coordination and cooperation of the grazing permittees. All adjustments were by agreement requiring no grazing decisions to be issued.

Use supervision continued to be emphasized in 1992 as the severe drought affected the capacities of virtually all allotments. Although there was an unusual amount of non-use by the permittees, the areas that were grazed presented some problems for the permittees and BLM. Reduced forage production and the lack of traditional water sources presented a situation that required constant monitoring to ensure that forage capacities were not exceeded. The use supervision program conducted periodic checks of areas of concern. With the help of the grazing permittees no major problems occurred, although some areas were grazed to levels higher than planned. Intensive use supervision was conducted in the Trout Creek/Oregon Canyon Mountains area to ensure accomplishing commitments to affected interests and to comply with terms and conditions regarding LCT and LCT habitat.

Wilderness

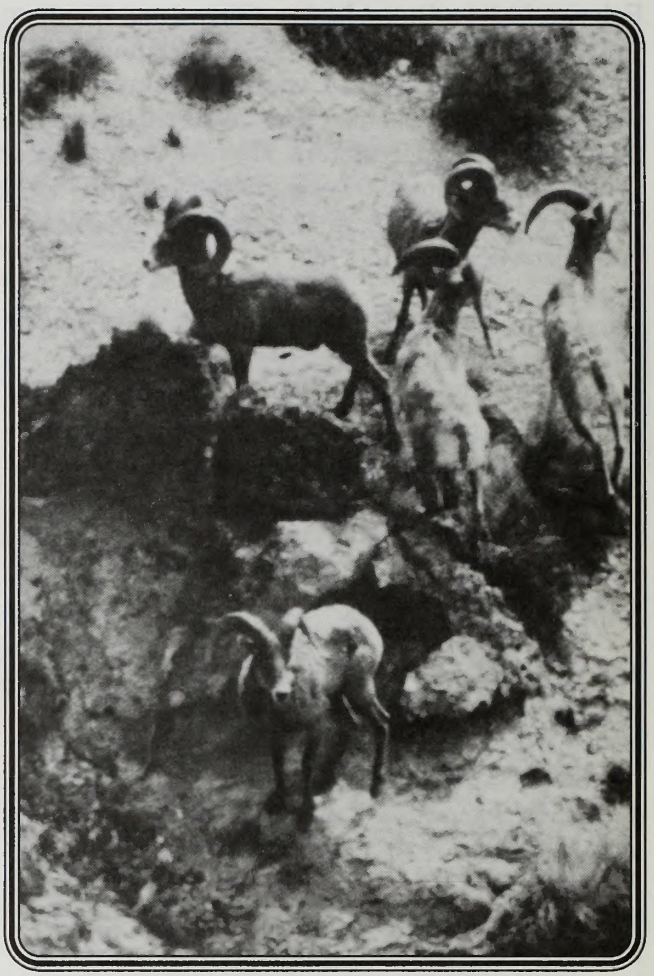
The wilderness program in the Jordan Resource Area continues to be a high priority. All Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are patrolled on the ground at least once

monthly during the field season, and many are subject to several patrols per month. Ground patrols are conducted by motor vehicle or mountain bike on roads and ways, horseback, backpacking or day hikes for cross country treks and floatboat on rivers. One aerial patrol this year provided WSA surveillance. However, due to limited funding, the aerial patrol only covered five WSAs.

The Trout Creek Mountains Group of WSAs continued to be a major focus, primarily due to the verification of the Lahontan cutthroat trout (a federally listed threatened species) within several streams and development of the allotment management plans. Efforts to determine appropriate management strategies are currently underway.

The Oregon Statewide Wilderness Study Report was signed by the President and submitted to Congress in Fiscal Year 1992. The report recommends wilderness designation for all or portions of 13 WSAs encompassing 627,491 acres located entirely or partially in the resource area.

Several rehabilitation projects were completed within WSAs this Fiscal Year. These projects included removal of vehicle debris (i.e., camper shell pieces and tires), removal of old fence rock jacks, and installation of a rock barrier to prevent vehicle impacts to vegetation at an overlook point along the Owyhee River Canyon.



Bighorn desert sheep re-established in 1965 along the Owyhee River are a healthy viable population today.

Wildlife

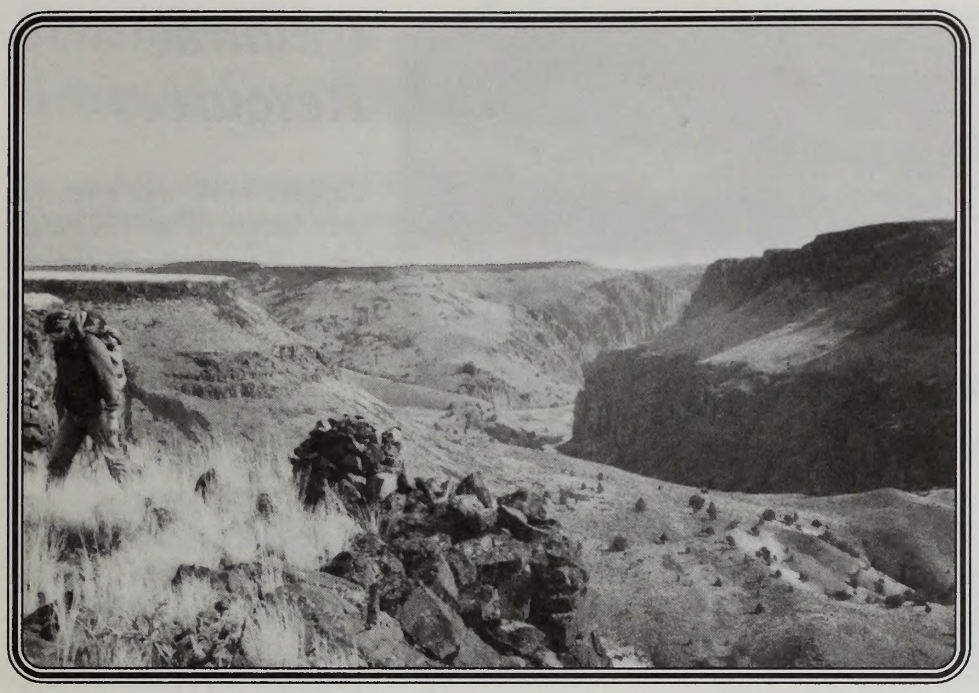
Vegetation is critically important to area wildlife, including mule deer, pronghorn antelope, bighorn sheep, chukar partridge, sage grouse, California quail, mourning dove, and waterfowl. The continuing, prolonged drought has caused loss of important cover and forage plants in many areas. Biologists have devoted a great deal of effort toward gathering information about both upland and riparian habitats during 1992. Among their findings was that annual production of both grasses and browse shrubs were much less than normal on much of the Jordan Resource Area. Several riparian areas entirely lost water which is vital to their short-term existence.

Vegetative utilization is monitored annually by the resource area biologist through browse transects and allotment inspections, and the information that is gathered is used by both BLM and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to evaluate management.

Riparian habitat improvement through management has been a major thrust within the Oregon Canyon and Trout Creek Mountain area near McDermitt. Through agreement with the livestock operators, one of the area's high elevation pastures has now received cattle use following three years of non-use. An intense monitoring effort occurred throughout the livestock use period.

Recreation

Recreation use continues to increase on public lands and waterways within the Jordan Resource Area. This



Day hiker coming out of the Owyhee Canyon on the West Hawkin Pack Trail.

growth is attributed primarily to a widespreading public awareness of primitive recreation opportunities.

Continued drought conditions resulted in extremely low water flows which in turn reduced the number of floatboaters on the Owyhee River this year. Thirteen commercial outfitters applied for and received Special Recreation Permits for the Owyhee River. Low flows also reduced the number of BLM floatboat patrols. BLM staff continued to provide visitor service, river clean-up, regulation compliance, and resource protection. An inventory of non-motorized access into the canyon was initiated, and 40 percent of this inventory is complete.

Landscaping work at the Rome Launch Site on the Owyhee River continued in fiscal year 1992. Tree planting, native vegetation seeding, and facility painting were welcomed improvements at Rome. Personnel stationed at Rome during the spring and summer provided visitor service and facility maintenance. Other river program accomplishments included search and rescue training, signing of access routes, updating of the boating guide, and improvement and maintenance of the Owyhee Springs site.

Birch Creek Ranch area continues to be a major management and maintenance commitment with both the road and ranch area available for public recreation. The full time caretaker provides visitor service, facility and grounds maintenance, and helps deter vandalism. Several buildings on the ranch are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Steps toward rehabilitation of the historical structures continued this year with the development of specific guidelines to stabilize each of the eligible buildings.

The National Wild and Scenic Owyhee River System planning effort continues into its second year. The updated plan incorporates management of the Owyhee River (including Birch Creek Ranch), West Little Owyhee River, and North Fork of the Owyhee River. These rivers were Congressionally designated as Wild Rivers within the National Wild and Scenic River (NWSR) System in 1984, 1988, and 1988 respectively. Such designation requires that special effort be given to protect and enhance the outstandingly remarkable river values of each river. The draft plan and environmental assessment was completed in May of 1992 and reviewed by the public. The final plan is scheduled for completion this summer.

Ground patrols, which are a routine part of the NWSR management program for the Owyhee system, were performed in the North Fork and West Little Owyhee River Canyons to gather data and to provide resource protection and visitor service.

A site plan and environmental assessment were completed for the Soldier Creek Watchable Wildlife Loop Road, which consists of Soldier Creek Road, Three Forks Road, and U.S. Highway 95. A site plan and environmental assessment were also completed for the Willow Creek Hot Springs site to determine and implement appropriate management actions for this highly sensitive intensive use area.

Resource area and Oregon State Office personnel completed design of the interpretive sign planned for

Jordan Resource Area archaeologists trace The-Hole-In-The-Ground petroglyphs onto mylar.

the unused side of the Taylor Grazing Act Interpretive Site kiosk. The display conveys recreation information along with interpretation of cultural, geology, wildlife, and other resources. Currently, the sign is being fabricated and is scheduled for installation this year.

Minerals

The minerals program remains small, and yet diverse. Resource area personnel processed one Notice of Intent for Mining Exploration, six inspections of existing mining claims, and two surface management inspections. Three Free Use Permits were issued for gravel in 1992 to the Malheur County Road District and Irrigation District. A number of five-year Free Use Permits, issued in past years by the Vale District, are monitored annually. Currently, the resource area has no mineral leasing activity. Two flat rock sales, and fourteen inspections of community mineral material site pits were completed.

Cultural Resources

Support work was a prominent feature of the 1992 Cultural Resources Program, some of which was drought related. Cultural resource inventories were completed for 73 projects on public domain administered by the BLM. Total acreage was 6,516 of which 2,231 acres were surveyed by the Jordan Resource Area archaeologists. The remaining 4,285 acres were surveyed by private contractors. Altogether, 111 sites were recorded, none of which were adversely affected by BLM construction and management activities. Where conflicts with other resources occurred, mandated consultation was initiated with the State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Among the sites recorded was the Willow Creek Ruins, which consisted of two stone houses built by homesteaders toward the end of the last century. An environmental assessment was written for an exclusion fence to be placed around the houses to prevent unauthorized, or potentially destructive, use. The structures were fenced and interpretive signs explain their historical significance were ordered.

Educational and interpretive signs were placed in the kiosk at the Rome Launch Site, and a handout for river runners describing the human history of the Owyhee River Canyon was completed. Interpretive signs for the Willow Creek Stage Station, Willow Creek Hot Springs, and Potter's Cave were ordered, but have not been received. Recording work at The-Hole-In-The-Ground Petroglyph Site continued.

Forty-four archeological sites were patrolled and monitored during the year. An inadvertent trespass on an archeological site was reconciled, and the site was tested for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.

Sensitive Plant and Animal Species

Several field tours were conducted this season by the Trout Creek Working Group which included biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's threatened and endangered species program. The Lahontan cutthroat trout, found in several of the major streams, is a federally listed threatened species.

Analysis of kit fox data, gathered in the Coyote Dry Lake area for the past several years, indicates the population potential is limited by the lack of stabilized sand dunes and associated rodent species. Population census data was also collected on bat species found in the Jordan Craters Research Natural Area.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

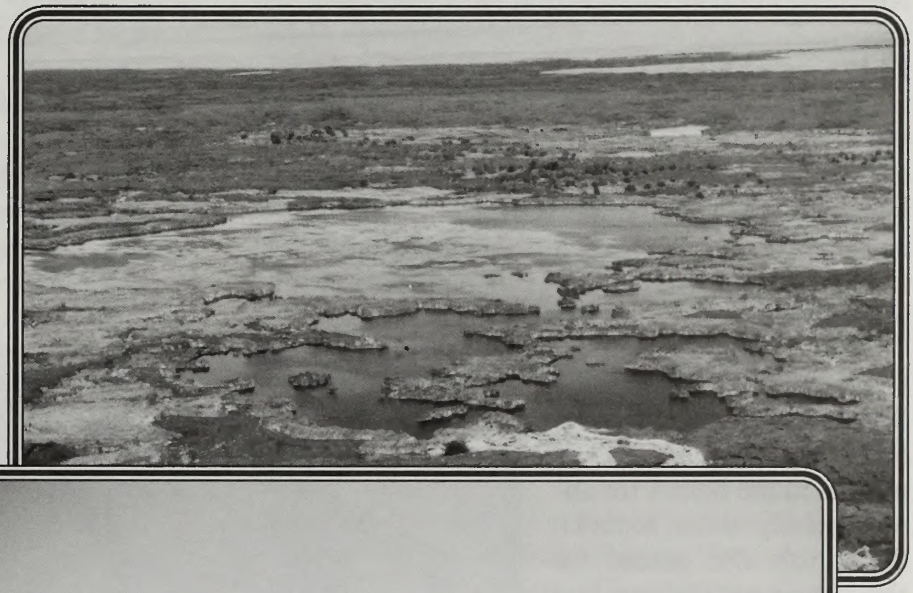
Four Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) are located in the Jordan Resource Area—Owyhee River, Jordan Craters, Saddle Butte Lava Tubes, and Whitehorse Basin. Each is visited periodically to monitor the well-being of their exceptional or unusual resources.

A special effort has been made in Whitehorse Basin where the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout are resident in several streams. Three consecutive years of non-grazing of the higher elevations has enabled a good recovery trend on many of the streams. Cattle use was allowed in one pasture under the guidance of the Whitehorse Butte Allotment Management Plan. Low water flow in this area due to the continuing drought is, however, an increasing problem for trout.

Research Natural Area

Pristine vegetation of the eastern kipuka of the Jordan Craters Research Natural Area has been studied periodically since 1978. This kipuka and another to the west are relict areas of original land (islands) surrounded by a sea of lava. Information from these sites can be used to compare with similar areas where various land uses occur. While vegetation is considered pristine in that modern man or livestock have not influenced the site, numerous cottontail rabbits and occasional mule deer use the plants. The effect of

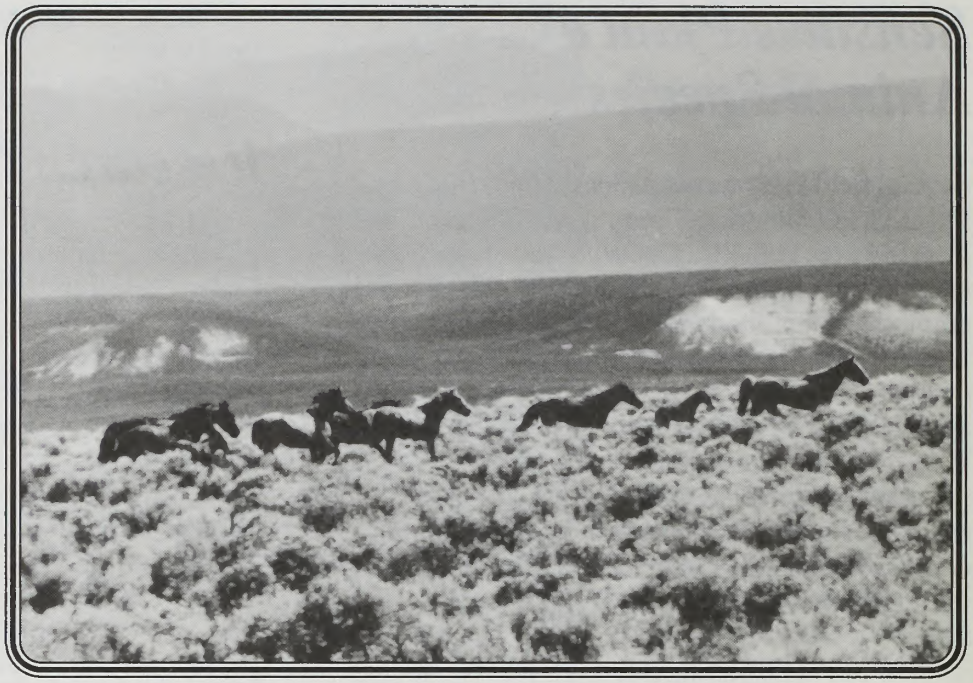
Batch Lakes formed when Jordan Crater lava flows dammed area springs (note white ban is sage brush and two-track road).



Coffee Pot Crater, one of the primary cinder cones in the Jordan Craters Research Natural Area.

present drought conditions is as apparent at these natural sites as on areas influenced by human activities.

Kipuka data from various studies beginning in 1978 through 1992 was summarized and presented in May at a Boise, Idaho, Symposium: Ecology, Management and Restoration of Intermountain Annual Rangelands.



Wild horse herd with the Steen Mountains in the background.

Wild Horses

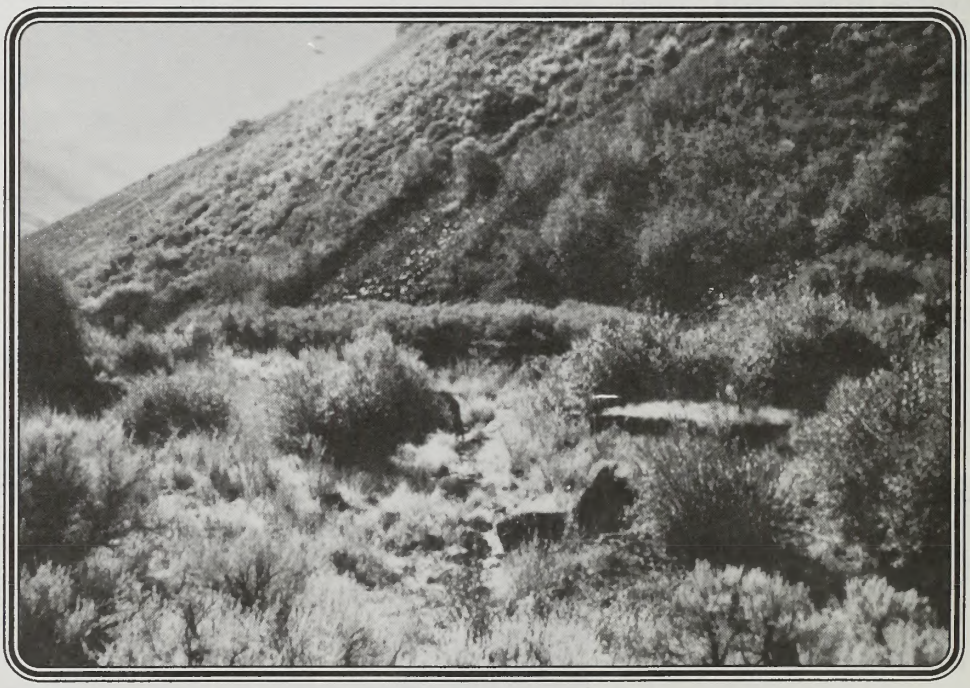
Frequent monitoring was done in the four Wild Horse Herd Management Areas (HMAs) within Jordan Resource Area due to drought conditions in 1992. Specific to the drought, livestock use was reduced within most of the HMAs during the 1992 grazing season as in the 1991 season. Because of population concerns, 393 horses were removed from the Jackies Butte, Sheepshead, and Sand Springs HMAs to maintain a thriving ecological balance and multiple use relationship. Thirty unadoptable horses were returned to the herd areas to comply with current policy of removing only adoptable animals.

Due to lack of water in the Sheepshead HMA, a hauling contract was let and water was trucked to the horses for approximately three months. Water was also hauled for about three months to a few horses on the Coyote Lake HMA that were watering on private land. Since water is the limiting factor in most HMAs, development of dependable water sources is being considered as a long-term solution.

All four HMAs are within proper management levels according to the 1992 population inventories.

Soils and Watershed

The continued drought and associated lack of stock water again required major reductions in grazing use in some allotments of the Jordan Resource Area. Some loss of native grasses and crested wheatgrass has



Livestock exclosure portion of Whitehorse Creek located in the Trout Creek Mountains.

been noted as a result of the prolonged dry period. Generally these sites have sufficient remaining grass stands that should thicken up when moisture returns.

Riparian habitat management and monitoring continued to be a major initiative within the soil and watershed program. The majority of projected work within the Oregon Canyon-Trout Creek Mountains was accomplished during the year. The resource area's wildlife program accomplishments include aerial photo analysis, and flights over McDermitt, Indian, Oregon Canyon, and Willow Creeks to obtain color photography. These photos are used in monitoring change of streamside vegetation over time. This year's aerial photography completed the third series of photographs on these streams. Photographs from the various years provide documentation of vegetative changes and allow comparisons to be made.

Land and Rights-of-Way

Realty staff processed the Stenger Land Gift Donation totaling 160 acres of raw rangeland containing wildhorse and wilderness values. The donation is located in the Barren Valley northwest of McDermitt between Crooked Creek Spring and Whitehorse Ranch. Three land exchanges proposed for completion in 1992 were delayed until 1993. One exchange was delayed due to the efforts of the realty staff to implement a direct public sale for resolving an occupancy and underground fuel storage tank trespass. The other two exchanges were delayed for further analysis of minerals and cultural resource values.

A Recreation Public and Purpose Lease for an existing landfill was renewed, and seven rights-of-way applications, and rights-of-way assignments were processed and granted. Also, one agricultural use, two dumps, one occupancy, and one right-of-way trespass were resolved. Two short-term agricultural permits were authorized, and four quarterly compliance checks were completed on one existing landfill. Six plans of operations were processed for the State of Oregon Highway Department rights-of-way to meet the needs of upcoming highway construction maintenance projects.

Fire Management

The Vale District Fire Management Activity Plan provides guidelines for fire management activities within Jordan Resource Area. BLM firefighters stationed at Burns Junction and Jordan Valley conduct fire suppression throughout the resource area, as well as areas beyond via interagency agreements.

Wildfire and man-caused (non-prescribed) fires increased from eight in 1991, to 18 in 1992. Acreage burned within the resource area totaled 4,021 acres, up 4,009 acres from last year. The increase is primarily due to effects of the prolonged drought such as extremely dry fuels. Jordan Resource Area fires represent 25 percent of the total area consumed by non-prescribed fire this year in the Vale District.

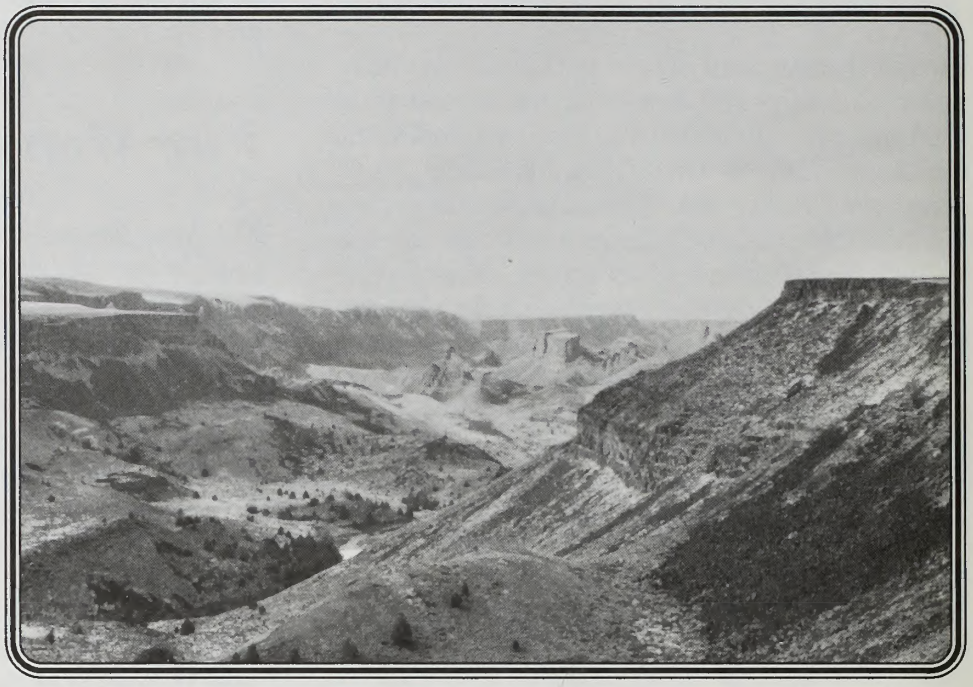
In addition to fire-related assignments, fire crews contributed 861 hours of labor performing seasonal maintenance and construction tasks.

Hazardous Materials Management

Hazardous materials level I surveys were conducted on the Eckstein Land Sale, Grenke Homestead, and Eiguren Land Exchange. Two dumping incidents were responded to within the Jordan Resource Area. In compliance with the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), reports were submitted to the State of Oregon Fire Marshal's Office on materials being stored at the Burns Junction Administrative Site.

1993 Program Initiatives

View north towards Law Butte on the middle section of the Owyhee River, Owyhee Canyon WSA.



Range Management

The range management program will continue to emphasize proactive on-the-ground management in 1993. Use supervision, drought management and monitoring of "I" and "M" allotments will receive the most emphasis. The Trout Creek area will continue to receive the most use supervision work as it did in 1992. Project work will be limited in 1993 due to funding constraints. Carry-over projects involving the Trout Creek/Oregon Canyon Mountains riparian effort will remain our highest priority range projects.

The eight allotments scheduled for evaluations in 1993 are: Willow Creek, Barren Valley, East Cow Creek, Gilbert, Raburn, and Whitehorse Butte (year one review of new Allotment Management Plan (AMP)). Four allotments are scheduled for evaluations in 1994: McCormick, Arock, Eiguren, and Sheepshead. Budget and priority constraints aside, evaluation meetings are scheduled from January to April, and evaluation documents are expected to be completed by the summer. If you are interested in any of the allotment evaluations, please advise the area manager.

Allotment planning efforts will continue to be emphasized during 1993. The Fifteen Mile Community Allotment Environmental Assessment (EA), originally scheduled for 1992, and the McCormick Allotment EA will be developed by analyzing grazing options for enhancing resource conditions. A final decision on the Zimmerman EA is expected during 1993, and a draft AMP will be developed shortly thereafter. Other work scheduled is revision of the final AMPs for the Antelope and West Cow Creek Allotments because the existing AMPs do not meet the objectives for those areas. These planning efforts represent a major workload as a result of setbacks incurred due to the management emphasis given to the drought and Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Special drought management is expected to continue in 1993. Pasture use guidelines which take into account water availability, soil moisture, new and old growth of key forage grasses and other factors will be used to determine livestock turnout in 1993. As of March 1992, most of the resource area is experiencing good moisture conditions. BLM is still prepared for grazing adjustments in some allotments due to lack of water and/or forage. Coordination with grazing permittees will be emphasized to minimize impacts to the environment as well as to permittee operations.

Wilderness

Interim management of Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will continue to be the priority in the wilderness program. Any potential project in WSAs will be evaluated to determine consistency with Interim Management Policy and Guidelines. Ground and aerial monitoring of all WSAs will continue, and signing of WSA boundaries will be increased.

A brochure for the Trout Creek Mountains WSAs will be developed in a cooperative effort with the Burns District, BLM. The brochure will provide information

Wildlife biologist holds newborn antelope.

on the area's wilderness values, and should be available to the public by the 1994 field season.

Baseline data collection on resource and social conditions will continue in 1993 to prepare for wilderness management requirements. Jordan Resource Area recreation staff will continue to collect data for the Limits of Acceptable Change process in the Lower Owyhee Canyon WSA. The collected information will provide needed data for effective management of the Owyhee Wild and Scenic River and potential wilderness areas.

Implementation of the Intermountain Wilderness Area Ecosystem Study within the Jordan Craters WSA may occur this fiscal year. This project is contingent upon funding from and coordination with the Environmental Sciences and Technology Center, Fort Collins, Colorado.

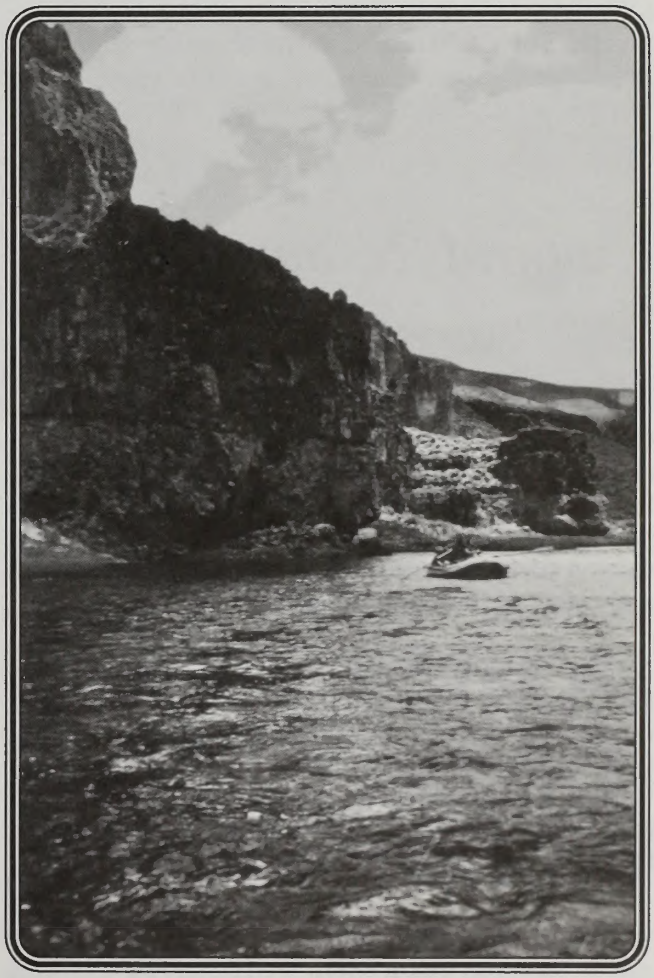
Wildlife

During 1993, emphasis will continue in riparian habitat management and monitoring. There will be special attention on the effects of renewed cattle grazing on portions of the Oregon Canyon-Trout Creek Mountain rangelands. The objective in this area, in particular, is to continue the effort of many people over several years to develop a grazing system which will enable continued recovery of the riparian ecosystem.

Upland vegetation will be studied in a continuation of work begun last year to better understand the effect of drought on native and introduced grasses.

Recreation

The Owyhee River System will continue to be the Jordan Resource Area's highest priority in recreation management. The management plan for the entire system is scheduled for completion in 1993 with implementation beginning the following year. The site plan and brochure for the



River runner on lower section of the Owyhee.

Soldier Creek Watchable Wildlife Loop Road are scheduled for implementation, as are portions of the Willow Creek Hot Springs Site Plan. Due to budget constraints, BLM will be unable to purchase and install the toilet facility at the Willow Creek Hot Springs site. Installation of the new interpretive sign at the Taylor Grazing Site should occur this year.

Emphasis will continue on signing of roads, access points, and use areas. Although the recreation maintenance budget continues to be reduced, special emphasis will be placed on maintaining existing recreation facilities.

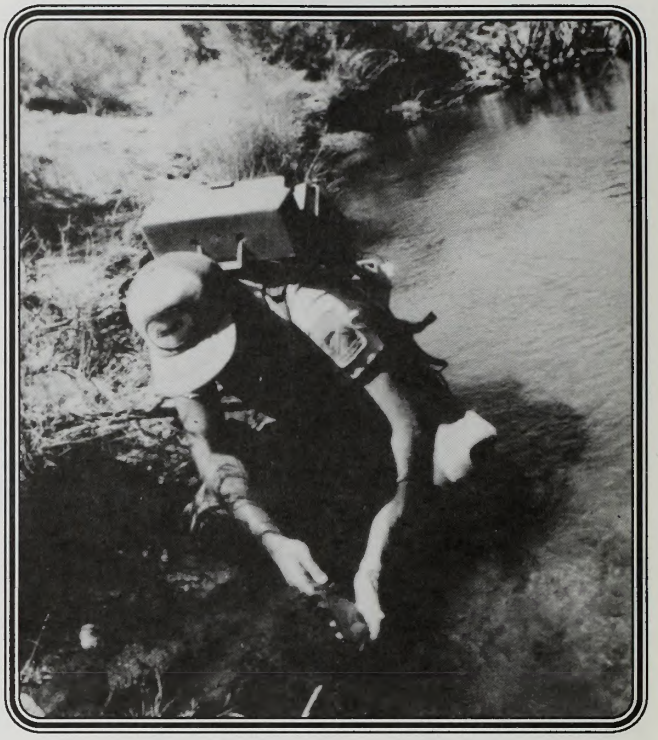
Minerals

Inventory and standardization of available data will continue to receive primary emphasis during 1993. Minerals staff will process applications for mineral materials associated with the maintenance of Malheur County roads, Oregon State highways, Jordan Valley Irrigation District, and BLM roads. Also, resource area personnel anticipate processing Notices of Intent for mining claims and conducting surface management enforcement inspections at about the same level as previous years. Finally, the resource area plans to inspect and post signs at community mineral material site pits.

Cultural Resources

The 1993 workload for the Cultural Resources Program includes continuing work on The-Hole-In-The-Ground Petroglyph Site and recording sites in the Owyhee River Canyon. The interpretive signs ordered in 1992 will be installed in 1993. Depending on funding, we may be able to record two other large petroglyph sites in the Owyhee Canyon, and reinspect canyon sites recorded in 1976 to determine the nature and extent of their deterioration.

Another priority project is to record a cabin constructed of lava rock by a trapper during the 1920s. The unique construction and lifestyle of the cabin represents an interesting part of southeast Oregon history. Finally, Jordan Resource Area Archaeologists anticipate a high demand for archaeological support work for the range, recreation, realty, and fire programs.



Fishery biologist inventories Lahontan cutthroat trout in Willow Creek of the Trout Creek Mountains.

Sensitive Plant and Animal Species

Several sensitive plants will be observed and studied during the coming field season to monitor their status in growth and reproduction. Plant inventories will be completed for all proposed development activities that involve ground disturbance.

Continuing goals for the sensitive animal species program include monitoring Lahontan cutthroat trout habitat, and field studies for the kit fox and Townsend's big-eared bat. BLM will provide close cooperation and consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a recovery plan for the threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Regular monitoring of ACECs will continue during 1993 to ensure that management is in accord with identified standards.

Pinto leads buckskin across the sagebrush range of the High Owyhee Desert.

Research Natural Area

Monitoring and research for plant and wildlife resources of the Jordan Craters Research Natural Area will continue. Special emphasis will be placed on riparian habitats due to drought effects.

Wild Horses

There are no horse removals planned for fiscal year 1993. Water development for horses will continue as funding becomes available. Increased monitoring of the HMAs will be emphasized to determine if adjustments in wild horse population levels are necessary to achieve or maintain a thriving ecological balance between horses, livestock, wildlife, and vegetation.

Soils and Watershed

Additional aerial color photography is programmed for several streams. Vegetation analysis is planned for photos taken in 1991 and 1992 to document vegetation trend and other data.

Lands and Rights-of-Way

The Eiguren land exchange totalling 1,245 acres is proposed for completion in 1993. The exchange provides federal lands for a similar acreage of private lands which have notable wildlife values. Exchanges for 1993 include two proposals involving acquisition of private lands within an area under wilderness review, in exchange for public lands not under wilderness review.

Realty staff will continue with right-of-way processing for utility lines and short-term agricultural permits. Authorization for a new landfill near McDermitt will be completed in preparation for closure of the existing McDermitt Landfill. Also, efforts toward completing unauthorized use cases within the Jordan Resource Area is a priority in 1993. This includes the sale of 3.58 acres at Burns Junction to resolve an occupancy and underground fuel storage tank trespass.

Fire Management

Fire management personnel intend to update the Vale District Fire Management Activity Plan, identify potential prescribed burn sites, and establish possible areas for green-stripping (planting of specific vegetation in strips along certain areas of concern to preclude wildfire from spreading). BLM firefighters will continue their suppression support of wildfire and human-caused fires as their primary duty. Fire crews will assist the resource area staff with seasonal maintenance and construction tasks.

Helicopter releases bucket over hot spot.

Hazardous Materials Program

In the future there will be increased overview and coordination with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality on mining activities in the Jordan Resource Area. Future endeavors will involve responding to illegal or "midnight dumps" and hazardous material incidents. In coordination with other resource programs, the hazardous material coordinator will be developing methodologies and inventory plans for identifying potential hazardous materials sites/situations.

The hazardous materials program will provide guidance and assistance to the realty program on the closure of the McDermitt Landfill.

Baker R.A.
Malheur R.A.
Jordan R.A.
VALE DISTRICT
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M A L H E U R
Malheur Cave
Indian Gr
Dry Lake
Turnbull
Crowley
Cedar Mtn
Quartz Mtn
Butte Creek
Owyhee
Mahogany Mountain
Mahogany Cr
Upper Cow Lake
Lower Cow Lake
Cow Creek
Sheaville
Saddle Butte
5285
Folly Farm
Juniper Lake
7215
SHEEPSHEAD MTS
Palomino Creek
Mann Lake
Wildcat Cr
Jordan Valley
Danner
Arock
Jordan Creek
Rome
Dry Cr
Hooker Creek State Wayside
Burns Junction
Indian Fort Cr
Soldier Creek
Spring Cr
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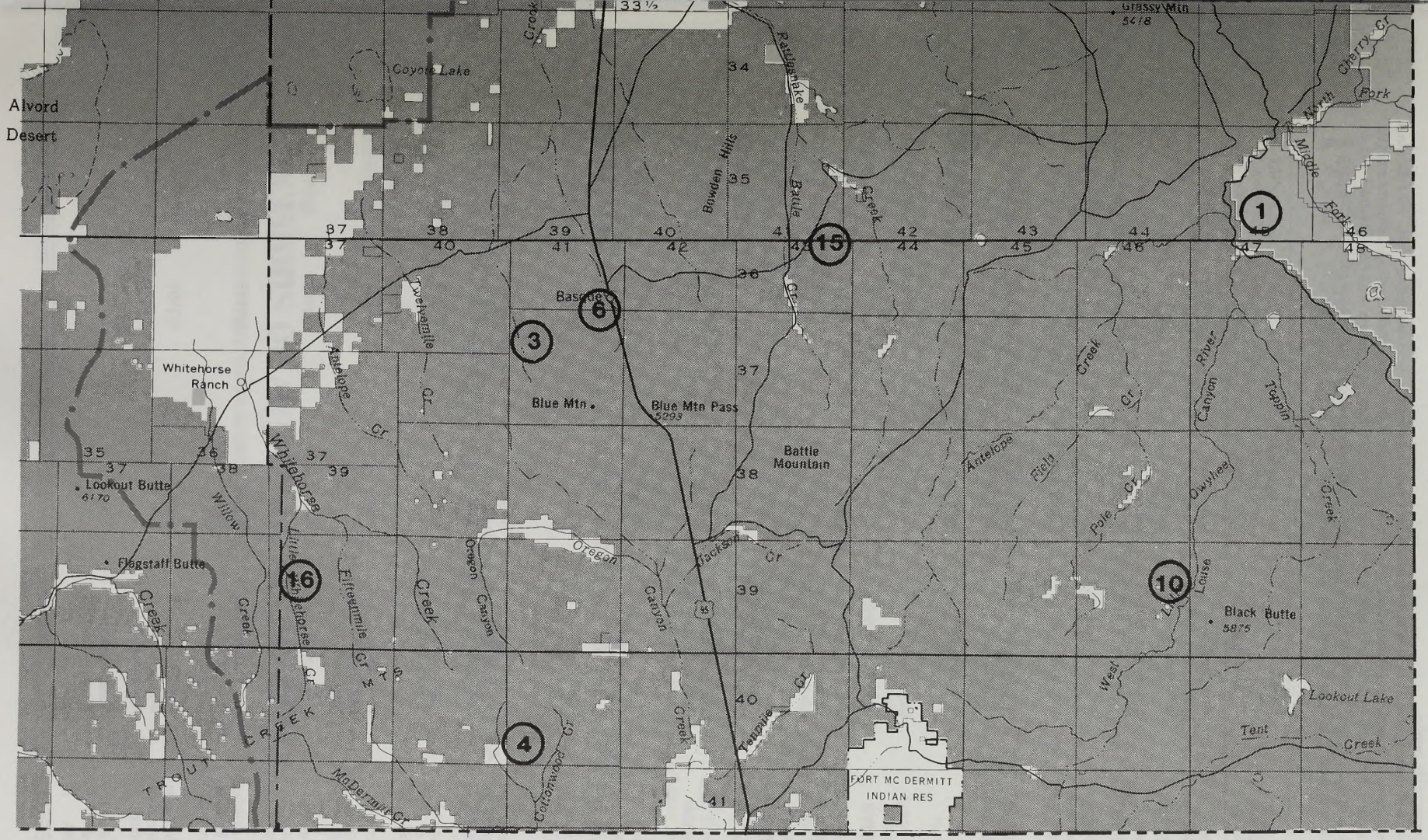

LEGEND

District Boundary

Planning Area Boundary

BLM Lands

State Lands

Private Lands

(4) New Proposed 1993 Project

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

VALE DISTRICT

Jordan Resource Area

1993

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REGISTER

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires an environmental analysis concerning the potential effects of any on-the-ground action before its approval. NEPA also requires that the analyses be open to the public.

During fiscal year 1993, the Jordan Resource Area will analyze several on-the-ground actions which may occur this year or in succeeding years. The following register lists the environmental assessments (EAs) anticipated for completion in fiscal year 1993 and other information to facilitate public participation in the analysis process. In addition to this register notice, legal notices will be published in the Ontario Argus Observer whenever an EA becomes available for public review.

If you wish to review any of the following EAs, please notify the Vale District Planning and Environmental Coordinator in writing, including in your request the Area Register Number and Project Name specific to the EA of interest.

Area Register Number	Project Name	Proposed Action	Location	Affected Special Area	Est. EA Completion Date	Est. FONSI Decision Date
1	Wild & Scenic Owyhee River System Plan	Implement management plan.	Main Owyhee, North Fork & West Little	W&S River, ACEC & WSA	3/1993	3/1993
2	Soldier Creek Watchable Wildlife Loop	Implement site plan.	Owyhee Overlook & Soldier Creek	National Watchable Area	11/1992	2/1993
3	15 Mile Community Allotment	Develop new grazing system.	15 Mile Allotment	Trout Creek Riparian Area	9/1993	10/1993
4	McCormick Allotment	Develop new grazing system.	McCormick Allotment	Trout Creek Riparian Area	9/1993	10/1993
5	Eiguren Exchange	Land Exchange	Rome, Oregon	None	4/1993	4/1993
6	Basque Pipeline #2	Install power-line to well storage tank.	Basque Seeding West Pasture 15 Mile Allotment	None	4/1993	4/1993
7	Owyhee Butte Pipeline	Extend the well pipeline and install water troughs.	Arock Pasture, West Cow Creek Allotment	None	4/1993	4/1993
8	Bennett Spring #2 Development	Develop spring and fence riparian area.	Bennett North Pasture, East Cow Creek Allotment	None	3/1993	3/1993
9	Bennett Reservoir	Construct reservoir for the Bennett North Pasture.	Bennett North Pasture, East Cow Creek Allotment	None	3/1993	3/1993
10	Exchange Spring Pipeline Reconstruct	Realign .5 of pipeline.	Louse Allotment	WSA-3-195	7/1993	7/1993
11	Riley Hom Prescribed Bum	2,500 acre bum.	Riley Hom Pasture, West Cow Creek Allotment	None	6/1993	6/1993
12	North Canter Reservoir	Reservoir survey and design only.	Cantor Pasture, Antelope Allotment	None	5/1993	5/1993
13	Antelope Seeding Pipeline Extension	Construct 3 miles of pipeline.	Antelope Flat, Antelope Allotment	None	6/1993	6/1993
14	Coyote Springs Pipeline	Construct 3 miles of pipeline.	Woolhawk Pasture, Gilbert Allotment	None	4/1993	4/1993
15	Mararoni Springs Pipeline	Construct 1 mile of pipeline.	Little Whitehorse Pasture, White-horse Butte Allotment	Trout Creek Riparian Area	5/1993	5/1993
16	Dog Lake Cross Fence	Move existing fence to make three new pastures.	Dog Lake pasture, West Cow Creek Allotment	WSA-3-120, Jordan Craters WSA	6/1993	6/1993
17	Parsnip Spring	Develop spring with head box and trough.	Parsnip Peak, Willow Creek Allotment	None	6/1993	6/1993
18	Soldier Creek Pipeline Extension	Construct 1 mile of pipeline.	Sheep Spring, Wroten Allotment	None	7/1993	7/1993

APPENDIX A

1992 Completed Rangeland Improvements

Type	Units	Benefiting Activity
Spring reconstruction/modification	4.0 each	Wildlife/Riparian
New reservoirs	1.0 each	Range/Riparian
Pipelines	15.5 miles	Range/Riparian
Fences(modification/removal)	2.5 miles	Range/Riparian
Fences maintained	5.0 miles	Riparian

1993 Carryover and Proposed Rangeland Improvements

Type	Units	Benefiting Activity
Grey Spring Pipeline	1.5 miles	Range
Willow Reservoir Fence	0.25 miles	Range/Riparian
Rock Creek Reservoir	1.0 each	Wildlife/Riparian
Basque Pipeline #2	7.0 miles	Range
Fifteen-Mile Drift Fence Removal	0.5 miles	Range
Little Whitehorse Pasture Fence Modification	2.0 miles	Range/Riparian

Allotment Management Plans Proposed in 1993

Zimmerman

Allotment Management Plans Proposed for Revision in 1993

West Cow Creek AMP
Antelope AMP

Decisions or Agreements in 1992

No formal decisions or agreements occurred in 1992.

Rangeland Program Summaries Maintenance

Maintenance of planning documents is an ongoing process. When changes are made in grazing systems, allotment boundaries, and the number of pastures, planning documents need to be updated to reflect these actions. Following are corrections/changes since the 1986 RPS Update:

Antelope Allotment(21002)/Little Allotment(11015)

In 1991, a new pasture called Little Pasture was formed out of pasture #02 (Antelope East) of the Antelope Allotment. In 1992, this pasture became the Little Antelope allotment affecting the acres and AUMs that are in the Antelope Allotment. Updated figures for the two allotments are:

Allotment Name	Allotment Number	Federal Acres	Active Pref. AUMs
Antelope	21002	46,983	9,964
Little Antelope	11015	398	109

Allotment Evaluation

Bowden Hills Allotment (10803)

Concerns: The present grazing system of winter use every year is meeting allotment objectives. Plant vigor is good throughout the allotment, but may be affected if the drought conditions continue.

Recommendations:

* Maintain the present winter use period for livestock grazing and maintain the active preference at 1,927 AUMs.
* Maintain proper use factor of 50 percent.
* Survey northern portion of allotment for locations to develop small water catchments.
* Establish trend photo plots and line/intercept transects.
* Maintain "M" allotment categorization.
* Re-evaluate the allotment in 10 years.

Campbell Allotment (11306)

Concerns: Drought conditions since 1987 have affected the Campbell allotment by increasing livestock use where reliable water is present. The headwaters of the West Little Owyhee River have received heavy use. Trend is downward in the Twin Springs pasture. Invader plant species such as Mule's Ear are increasing in some areas.

Recommendations:

* Construct a riparian fence on the headwaters of the West Little Owyhee River to eliminate livestock impacts. Trailing of livestock will be allowed through exclosure.
* Survey Horse Hill pasture for potential water developments.
* Analyze water development proposals by Lucky 7 Ranch.
* Establish trend plots in Twin Springs, Peacock and Horse Hill pastures.
* Establish photo plot in Larribeau pasture.
* Do not permit temporary nonrenewable grazing use unless supported by improved vegetative and precipitation conditions.
* Change AMP objectives to reflect RPS objectives and condition.

Anderson Allotment (01401)

Concerns: The existing AMP signed in 1984 is not being followed due to water availability for late season grazing use. Interim grazing as indicated on grazing permit is meeting allotment objectives.

Recommendations:

* Revise 1984 AMP to reflect present grazing practices.
* Inspect range improvements to determine condition.
* Maintain the present active preference of 2,964 AUMs.
* Evaluate allotment in 10 years.
* Inventory Bull and Spring pastures prior to next evaluation to determine if ecological condition has advanced to late condition.
* Continue to permit livestock trailing at Spring Creek crossing.
* Require permittee to report actual use by pasture.

Ten Mile (Seeding) Allotment (01308)

Concerns: Early season grazing use every year combined with the long-term drought is affecting plant vigor. Poor livestock distribution is causing wolf plants as some plants receive heavy use and others receive no use. At present, water is available only from about March to June. Continued early season use would be expected to cause downward trend.

Recommendations:

* Maintain a proper use factor of 60 percent.
* Design grazing system that will lessen the number of wolf plants in the seeding.
* Evaluate allotment again in 1996.
* Remove riparian objective for McDermitt landfill from RPS.
* Keep allotment as an "M" category allotment.

Raburn Allotment (11005)

The name of this allotment has been changed to SB.

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VALE, OREGON 97918

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